

pieces of exercise equipment on television and in the magazines. If it were that easy to lose weight, everyone would be slim and trim. By the time the consumer realizes that fads and gimmicks do not replace poor eating habits and lack of sensible exercise programs, they have paid for an expensive lesson.

As physicians and health care professionals we must utilize a common sense approach to weight management in our patient population as well as ourselves. We should strengthen our efforts to hold these companies accountable for the false claims made to the vulnerable public. If something sounds too good to be true, it usually is!

Western Diet Linked to Type 2 Diabetes

David Hefner

The typical Western diet—red meat, high-fat dairy products, refined grains and desserts—may increase your chances for Type 2 diabetes.

That's what researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health have found and reported in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

The news isn't particularly shocking but offers a new view on the health risks of a typical Western diet as a whole, rather than simply attacking elements within the diet such as fatty foods.

"It's the entirety of the diet that's important," Dr. Frank B. Hu, the study's lead author, was reported as saying in *The New York Times*.

The researchers surveyed 42,000 men over a 12-year period. The men's eating habits were

divided into two groups: those who followed a Western diet and those who followed a "prudent" diet with fruit, vegetables, whole grain, fish and poultry.

"Over the course of the study ... 1,321 new cases of Type 2 diabetes were diagnosed," *The New York Times* reported.

Type 2 diabetes is linked to blindness, kidney failure and heart disease.

References

1. Hu, Frank B. et al. "Dietary Patterns and Risk for Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus in U.S. Men." *Annals of Internal Medicine* 136: 201-209.
2. Nagourney, Eric. "Nutrition: Linking the Western Diet to Diabetes." *The New York Times*, Feb. 12, 2002.

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